PROPOSALS

For PRINTING by SUBSCRIPTION in Two Volumes Folio, the

WORKS

OF THAT

Moſt LEARNED, FACETIOUS, and ANCIENT ENGLISH POET

Sir *GEOFFREY CHAUCER*, Knt.

POET LAUREAT:

CONTAINING

The PROLOGUES *to the* CANTERBURY TALES.
The KNIGHT'S TALE.
The MILLER'S TALE.
The REVE'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The COOK'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE *of an* UNTHRIFTY PRENTICE.
The COOK'S TALE *of* GAMELYN.
The LAWYER'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The SQUIRE'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The Words of the MERCHANT *to the* SQUIRE, *and the Words of the* HOST *to the* MERCHANT.
The MERCHANT'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The WIFE *of* BATH'S PROLOGUE & TALE.
The FRIAR'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The SUMPNOUR'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The CLARK *of* OXFORD'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The FRANKELIN'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The Second NUN'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The CANNON'S YEOMAN'S PROLOGUE & TALE.
The PHYSICIAN'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The WORDS *of the* HOST.
The PARDONER'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The SAILOR'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The PRIORESS'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The WORDS *of the* HOST *to* CHAUCER.
The RIME *of Sir* TOPAZ.
CHAUCER'S TALE *of* MELIBEUS.
The MONK'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The NUN'S PRIEST'S PROLOGUE & TALE.
The MANCIPLE'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The PLOWMAN'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The PARSON'S PROLOGUE *and* TALE.
The RETRACTATION.
ROMANCE *of the* ROSE.
The FIVE BOOKS *of* TROYLUS *and* CRESEIDE.
The TESTAMENT *and* COMPLAINT *of* CRESEIDE.
The LEGEND *of* GOOD WOMEN, CLEOPATRA, THISBE, DIDO, HYPSIPYLE, MEDEA, LUCRETIA, ARIADNE, PHILOMELA, PHYLLIS, *and* HYPERMNESTRA.
BALLAD *of* CHAUCER.
BOETIUS *de* CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIÆ.
CHAUCER'S DREAM.
The DEATH *of* BLANCH.
The ASSEMBLY *of* FOOLS.
How PITY *is* DEAD.
Q. ANNELIDA *and falſe* ARCITE.
The ASSEMBLY *of* LADIES.
The CONCLUSIONS *of the* ASTROLABE.
The BLACK KNIGHT'S COMPLAINT.
A PRAISE *of* WOMEN.
The THREE BOOKS *of the* HOUSE *of* FAME.
FLOWER *and the* LEAF.
The PROLOGUE *and the* THREE BOOKS *of the* TESTAMENT *of* LOVE.
MARY MAGDALEN'S LAMENTATION.
The REMEDY *of* LOVE.
The COMPLAINT *of* MARS *and* VENUS.
A BALLAD *in Commendation of our* LADY.
The CUCKOW *and* NIGHTINGALE.
CHAUCER'S GOOD COUNSEL.
BALLAD *of the* VILLAGE *without* PAINTING.
CHAUCER *to his* EMPTY PURSE.
CHAUCER'S BALLADS *of* GENTEELNESS, COVETOUSNESS, *and* NEGLIGENCE.
Againſt the INCONSTANCY *and* DOUBLENESS *of* WOMEN.
His CRAFT *of* LOVERS.
A BALLAD.
The TEN COMMANDMENTS *of* LOVE.
The NINE WORTHY LADIES, *and other* BALLADS.
The COURT *of* LOVE.
CHAUCER'S DREAM *in* PRAISE *of* JOHN *of* GAUNT *the* KING'S SON, *and* BLANCH DAUGHTER *of* HENRY D. *of* LANCASTER.
CHAUCER'S A B C, *or* PRAYER *made for the Uſe of* BLANCH DUTCHESS *of* LANCASTER.
JACK UPLAND, *or the* IGNORANCE *and* DISCORD *of* CHURCHMEN.
PROLOGUE, *and* MERRY ADVENTURES *of the* PARDONER *and* TAPSTER *at the* INN *at* CANTERBURY.
The MERCHANT'S *Second* TALE, *or the* HISTORY *of* BERYN.
CHAUCER'S WORDS *unto his own* SCRIVENER.
The FLOWER *of* COURTESY. [*La belle Dame ſan Mercy.*
CUPID'S LETTER.
JOHN GOWER *unto* KING HENRY IV.
SCOGAN'S *moral* BALLAD *to the* LORDS *and* GENTLEMEN *of the* KING'S HOUSE.
LIDGATE'S BALLAD *of* GOOD COUNSEL. *And*
The STORY *of* THEBES.

CRITICAL, POETICAL, HISTORICAL, and EXPLANATORY NOTES, to render the Work both eaſy and pleaſant to the READER, and, by ſhewing his unparellel'd BEAUTIES, convince every judicious ENGLISHMAN, that this our AUTHOR is no ways inferior to the greateſt POETS that have wrote in any Nation or Language, either before or after him.

By *JOHN ENTICK*, M. A.

——— *Seris venit uſus ab annis.* Ovid. Met. vi. 29.

Out of OLD FIELDS, as Men ſayth,
Cometh all this NEW CORN fro Yere to Yere,
And out of OLD BOOKS (in good Fayth)
Cometh all this NEW SCIENCE that Men lere. CHAUCER.

CONDITIONS:

THIS Work is now ready for the Preſs, and will make two Volumes in Folio, printed on the ſame Paper, and with a new Letter, the ſame Size as the Specimen annex'd.

THAT they who chuſe to ſubſcribe, at the firſt, (FOR THE WHOLE) are only deſir'd to give in their Names and Places of Abode; no Money being required to be depoſited or paid till upon Delivery of their Order, which will be no more than at the rate of the weekly SUBSCRIPTION, 6*d.* (for every five Sheets) ſo that Gentlemen need not fear to be impoſed upon by a Diſcontinuation of this Work.

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AND when the whole is finiſhed, a curious BUSTO will be printed of CHAUCER, finely engraved on a Copper-plate, to front the Work, and delivered to each SUBSCRIBER for 6*d.*

THE Firſt Number of this WORK, ſhall be publiſhed on, or about next *Michaelmas:* Therefore, thoſe that are willing to encourage this Undertaking, are deſir'd to be as expeditious and punctual in their Directions as poſſible; becauſe there ſhall be no more printed than ſubſcribed for.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are taken in at the following PLACES, *viz.* By *C. Bennet* and *W. Baker* Proprietors, at the *Blue-Ball* in *Holyday-Yard, Creed-Lane. Slaughter*'s Coffee-Houſe in St. *Martin*'s *Lane. Brown*'s Coffee-Houſe in *Spring Garden* by *Charing-Croſs. Alice*'s Coffee-Houſe in *Old Palace-Yard, Weſtminſter. Tilt-Yard* Coffee-Houſe, *Whitehall. Rainbow* Coffee-Houſe in *Villar*'s Street in the *Strand. Talbot Inn*, in *Southwark*. Mr. *Thomas*'s at the *Bear-Inn, Horſe-Ferry Weſtminſter*. Mr. *Hollier* at the *Harp* in *Fulwood*'s *Rents, Holbourn*. Mr. *Clark* Engraver, *Grays-Inn. Daniel*'s Coffee-Houſe within *Temple-Bar. Church* Coffee-Houſe in St. *Clement*'s Church-Yard, *Strand. Arthur*'s Coffee-Houſe, oppoſite *Burlington* Houſe, *Piccadilly. Smyrna* Coffee-Houſe, *Pall-Mall. Union* Coffee-Houſe, St. *James*'s Street. *Mount* Coffee-Houſe, *Groſvenor-Street. King*'s Coffee-Houſe, *Carnaby-Market*. City of *Durham* in *Swallow-Street, Piccadilly. Betts*'s at the City of *Norwich* in *D'acre-Street, Weſtminſter. Rainbow* Coffee-Houſe, *Ludgate-Hill. Lincoln*'s-*Inn* Coffee-Houſe, *Chancery-Lane. Abington*'s Coffee-Houſe, *Holbourn. Sepulchre*'s Coffee-Houſe, *Snow-Hill. Baker*'s Coffee-Houſe, *Newgate-Street. Amſterdam* Coffee-Houſe, behind the *Royal-Exchange. Biſhop*'s-*gate* Coffee-Houſe, within *Biſhop*'s-*gate. Hercules*' Pillars in *Great Queen-Street, Lincoln*'s-*Inn-Fields. Jack*'s Coffee-Houſe in *King-Street, Guildhall.*

THE INTRODUCTION.

IT is an old and true philoſophical Poſition, That *the Infant is poſſeſſed of an equal Share of the rational Soul with thoſe that are grown up to riper Years:* That this was the Opinion of the Learned thro' all Ages, and is the Doctrine of the preſent Generation, may eaſily be evinced by only producing their conſtant Definition of *a Man*, whom with one Voice they define *a rational Animal**. A Definition no ways adequate to the Thing defin'd, if the above-mention'd Poſition be deny'd; becauſe we could produce infinite Examples of Men, was this Poſition taken away, that cou'd not be imply'd under the Name *Rational Animal*; ſo that thoſe miſerable Objects of our Compaſſion, Fools or Madmen, are living Proofs that *the Soul acts more or leſs vigorouſly according to the Capacity of the Organs of that Body, which it animates.* Ignorance and ſuperficial Science, falſely ſo call'd, has led ſome into that erroneous Suppoſition, "That GOD has eſtabliſh'd a Gradation of "Underſtanding from the loweſt Brute to the "Prince of Angels:" But the true Philoſophy ſhares the rational Soul to every Man alike; which, if it does not ſhine with the ſame Luſtre in every Body, is either clouded under the Defects of Nature, weak Spirits, or a broken Conſtitution; or wants to be uſher'd into the World by a liberal Education. And in this View of Mankind we ſee it divided into three Kinds; Thoſe who diſplay themſelves by an happy Conjunction of good Natural Parts with a Liberal Education: Thoſe who enjoy but One or the Other; and ſuch as are really deſtitute of both. Under which laſt Sort, we may juſtly rank that Droſs of Nature (let them be of what Degree of Life ſoever) that ſtop their Ears to the Dictates of Reaſon, and yield themſelves Slaves to their brutiſh Paſſions. The Memory of theſe deſpicable People, ought to be obliterated in profound Obſcurity and Oblivion, when their Bodies ſink into the Earth: Yet how many do we find recorded by ſome fictitious Epitaph on a Marble-Tomb? while others, Nature's Darlings, but the Sport of the World, whoſe noble Actions and wiſe Counſels in the *Field* and *Cabinet*, or ingenious *Writings* publiſh their immortal Fame, are either totally eclypſed, or, at leaſt, become ſo dwindling as ſcarce to be known from the Droſs of the Multitude. And this may be more particularly exemplify'd by that Diſgrace we find of the Antient *Engliſh* Poets in theſe latter Ages.

IN former Days there was ſcarce any *Great Man* without his *Domeſtic Poet. Scipio*, and the much more renowned *Alexander* of *Macedon*, are remarkable Proofs of this Aſſertion: and the famous Soldier and Poet *Alcæus* declared his Opinion, "That "there is as much *Martial Muſick* in the harmoni-"ous Cadence of Numbers, as in the louder Noiſe "of *Drums* and *Hautboys*." But of late, their Diſregard and ill Treatment, tend only to deface their real Uſe and Profit, and to enforce a Credence of their Inſignificancy. A hard Fate! that Men, who have deſerv'd the Praiſe of the moſt polite Ages and Courts, who have, like *Silkworms*, unravelled their very Bowels for the Service of Mankind, muſt themſelves be entombed in their own Bottoms! How this undeſerv'd State became entail'd on thoſe eminent Poets, may be gueſſed at from the following Obſervations.

Mr. THOMAS RYMER † obſerves, That at the Beginning of the Reformation, the Name of POET was a mighty Scare-crow to the jealous Doctors of the *Romiſh* Church. *This* POET, or *t'other* POET, Poet *Reuclin*, or Poet *Eraſmus* were a continual Uneaſineſs to the *German* Doctors and Profeſſors of *Cologne*. And *Campanella* the Jeſuit [illegible] Hereſies began with Sing-ſong, and are propagated by Comedies and Tragedies.

Mr. JOHN NORRIS ‖ obſerves, that this moſt excellent and divine Art of Poetry, has of late been ſo cheapned and depretiated by the *bungling* Performances of ſome who thought themſelves *inſpired*, that our *Modern Poetry* is no more like that of former Times, than *Modern Religion* is like *Primitive Chriſtianity*. 'Tis with *this* as with our *Muſick:* From grave, majeſtick, ſolemn Strains, where deep inſtructive Senſe is ſweetly convey'd in charming *Numbers*, where equal Addreſs is offer'd to the *Judgment* and *Imagination*, and where *Beauty* and *Strength* go hand in hand, 'tis now for the moſt part dwindled down to light, frothy Stuff, conſiſting only of many extravagant *Rants* or ſlight *Witticiſms*, and little *Amorous Conceits*, fit only for a *Tavern Entertainment*; which *Froth* and *Emptineſs* have almoſt reduced the Name of a POET to be ſynonymous with a *Country Fidler*.

THE third Obſervation is my own: Thoſe modern Poets who have ſung well, I've obſerv'd, are great *Plagiaries* on the Writings of the Eminent

* *Animal Rationale.*

† *Short View of Tragedy*, p. 34.

‖ *Pref. to his Collection of Miſcellanies.*

Bards,

Bards, that adorn'd this Nation in former Ages: So that they combine, as in one Voice, to riſque the Reputation of the whole ART of POETRY, rather than it ſhou'd be diſcover'd whence they have ſtoln thoſe noble Thoughts, which they preſent in a modern Dreſs, as the Product of their own inſufficient Brains. Theſe only labour their own Praiſe on the Ruin of their Betters; whom ſometimes they'll brand with that inſinuating evil Character of *Obſolete*; by which at other times they'll ingenuouſly confeſs no more is meant than that the *Style is old.* Thus we ſee the Poets of our Days preparing a way to their own Ruin. For, if Antiquity be a Crime? won't this be as good an Argument for them, who may ſucceed in future Ages, to throw our preſent POETS aſide, and condemn them to the Drudgery of the *Chandler* or *Tobacco-Man?*

How true any of theſe Obſervations may appear to the judicious Reader I know not: All that I infer from them is, That Poetry in *England* never flouriſht more than in the Days of Sir GEOFFERY CHAUCER, the Riches of his Underſtanding flow'd like Nectar on every Word; whoſe elegant Stile adorn'd his happy Invention, and his Profeſſion obtain'd for him Riches and Honours. Then the *Poet*, the *Scholar* and *Gentleman* were ſo well united, that each added to the other's Beauties. Then a POET was more like a PRINCE than a *Beggar*, as latterly they appear.

Then Poets *were held a moſt* ſacred Name,
And plac'd with Firſt-rates *in the Liſts of* Fame
Then a Poet *was a Part of that Quire,*
Whom Kings *eſteem, and* Heaven *does inſpire:*
Then by Verſe *ſome the Love of* Princes *gain'd,*
Who oft vouchſafed ſo to be entertain'd. *Oldh.*

AND my Opinion is, that if the latter Poets had not endeavour'd to raiſe their own pedantick Fame upon the degrading of their Predeceſſors inimitable Works; there would been no Reaſon for this Reflection under a Prince * who always encouraged the Ingenious:

The Wretch at ſumming up of his miſpent *Days,*
Found nothing left, but Poverty *and* Praiſe:
Of all his Gains by Verſe *he cou'd not ſave*
Enough to purchaſe Flannel *and a* Grave:
Reduc'd to Want, he *in due-time falls ſick,*
Was feign to die, and be interr'd on Tick:
And well might bleſs the Fever *that was ſent*
To rid him hence, and his worſe Fate *prevent.*
Oldham.

So wretched that if Pharaoh *could Divine,*
He might have ſpar'd his Dream of ſeven lean Kine,
And chang'd his Viſion for the Muſes Nine. *Dryd.*

THEREFORE my preſent Undertaking is to reſcue that famous *Engliſh* POET Sir GEOFFERY CHAUCER out of that Oblivion into which his *pi-*

* *Charles* II.

ratical Imitators have endeavour'd to bring him; and thereby to reſtore ſuch a Regard for POESY, as may not only convince the erring World of how great Service it is to Mankind, but alſo encourage many ſleeping Genius's to a true and eager Search after the Muſes, which, or nothing, will effectually ſtop both the Pens of the ſcribling *Poetaſter*, and the ſpreading of that low Eſteem, which now prevails, of the divine ART of POETRY.——I call it *Divine*, becauſe it appears from its Uſe among the moſt barbarous Nations, that GOD has implanted That in them as a proper Manner to adore him in. Thus

IF we conſider *Poeſy* in her firſt Inſtitution, e're ſhe became a common Proſtitute to Luſt, Flattery, Ignorance and Ambition, we ſhall find her alone acknowledged as the Sovereign Princeſs of the Civiliz'd World, and behold her from her Throne giving Laws, not only to their *Religion* and *Policy*, but alſo to their *Manners.* Her Court was eſteem'd the proper and only School of *Vertue*, to which the greateſt Princes form'd theirs, and under her Cuſtody alone was kept ſeal'd that Fountain, whence all the profitable Inſtructions of Life were to be drawn. *Philoſophy* itſelf was a thing of no Uſe and deſtitute of *Arms*, 'till ſhe ſupply'd 'em; nor durſt it appear in the World without the eaſy Chain of *Verſe*, in Token of Submiſſion to her for its *Paſſport.* The ſame may be ſaid of all other *Arts*, That from *Her* they've received their *Birth* and *Vigour.* And our Author was ſo well convinced of this Truth, and was ſo well qualify'd in the Art of *Poetry*, that he has adapted it to all Parts of Literature: An Aſſertion not broach'd by me, with bare-faced Impudence, to ſerve a *Turn*, but deriv'd and confirm'd to us from the lateſt Antiquity and conſtant Teſtimony, which directed the Pen of our Ingenious and Learned Countryman to record, that

Old Chaucer, *like the Morning Star,*
To us diſcovers Day from far,
His Light *thoſe* Clouds *and Miſts diſſolv'd,*
Which our Dark Nation *long involv'd:*
But He *deſcending to the Shades,*
Darkneſs *again the* Age *invades.* J.Denham.*p.*89.

AND what this honourable poetic Knight has ſummed up in general to the everlaſting Praiſe of our Author, was what he had received particularly from the Teſtimony of his Predeceſſors renowned in Poetry. For

THO' it is a very uncommon Example to ſee the World brought to a true Idea and a juſt Praiſe of a Writer in his Life time; our Author gain'd ſo much the Affections of his Cotemporaries, that, beſides his wearing the Laurel in three different Reigns *, and his Honour of Knighthood, he was ſolicited to, and favour'd with a Marriage in Alli-

* *Hen.* IV. V. VI.

ance

ance to the great Duke of *Lancaſter John* of *Gaunt*, as a Reward of his Works. And he, that was ſo careſs'd in his Life on the Score of his Writings, cou'd, no doubt, but find equal Lamentation in his Death: For thus we read in his Cotemporary *John Lidgate*'s Prologue to his Tranſlation of *Boccace* of *The Fall of Princes*.

My Mayſter *Chaucer* with his freſh Comedies
  Is dede, alas! cheife Poet of *Bretayne*,
That whilom made ful piteous Tragedies,
  The *Fall of Princes* He did alſo complayne,
  As He that was of makyng Soverayne:
    Whom all this Londe ſhulde of right preferre,
    Sith of our Langage He was the *Lode-ſterre*.

  Wherefore let us give him Laude and Glorye,
  And put his Name with Poetes in Memorye.

And as his Works, which you ſee, made him ſo regarded by his own Generation, his Merit daily increaſed, the more the World enjoy'd an Opportunity of 'em. *Will. Caxton* printed a Book where in the 33d Chapter of *The Praiſe of the Virgin Mary* we find it recorded;

And eke my Meſter *Chaucer*'s now is grave,
  The noble rether Poet of *Brytayne*,
That worthy was the Lawrel to have,
  Of Poetrye and the Palm attayne,
  That made firſt to dyſtylle and rayne
    The gold dewe dropys of Speche and Eloquence
    Into our Tunge through his Excellence.
And fonde the Flouris firſt of Rethoryke
  Our Rude Speche only to enlumine,
That in our Tunge was never none Him lyke,
  For as the Sonne doth in Heven ſhyne
  In Mydday Spere down to us by Lyne,
    In whos Preſence no Sterre may appere,
    Right ſo his Dittees withouten ony Pere.

But, as daily Example inſtructs us, that neither *Eloquence* nor *Language* are more able to propagate the deſerved Character of an Author to Poſterity, than *Vertue* and *Honeſty* to recommend a Politician; ſo our Author, thro' the Groſſneſs and Barbarity of the Age wherein he writ, and for ſome Time after, when all good Learning was almoſt aſleep, was thrown aſide in the Crowd, or; at leaſt, ſo wretchedly maim'd and deprav'd by the Ignorance of his Tranſcribers, that he ran a manifeſt Riſque either of being loſt to ſucceeding Ages, or to have his Senſe ſo baſely confounded, that his Meaning could ſcarce be found out. But, when that noble Art of Printing was, like a Gift from Heaven, ſent to cultivate Learning in the World; we can trace his deſerved Character reſtored by the Light, which his own Works darted thro' the Pens of ſome, who are not ſo ingenuous to acknowledge their borrow'd Pride, and of others who glory in his Imitation. Thus the renowned *Spencer* in his *Fairy Queen*, L. 4. Can. 2. Stanza 31, *&c.*

31
Dan *Chaucer* (well of *Engliſh* undefil'd)
On Fam's eternal Bead-roll worthy to be fil'd.

32
But wicked Time, that all good Thoughts doth waſte
And Works of nobleſt Wits to nought outwear,
That famous Monument hath quite defac'd
And robb'd the World of Treaſure endleſs dear,
The which might have enrich'd all us here.
O curſed Eld! The Canker-worm of Wits!
How may theſe Rhymes (ſo rude as doth appear)
Hope to endure, ſith Works of heavenly Wits
Are quite devour'd, and brought to nought by lit-[tle Bits.

33
Then pardon, O moſt ſacred happy Spirit,
That I thy Labours loſt may thus revive,
And ſteal from Thee the Meed of thy due Merit,
That none durſt ever while thou waſt alive,
And being dead, in vain yet may ſtrive;
Ne dare I like, but through Infuſion ſweet
Of thine own Spirit (which doth in me ſurvive)
I follow here the footing of thy Feet,
That with thy Meaning ſo I may the rather meet.

This deſerv'd Eſteem of Sir *Geoffery Chaucer*, raiſed him up a Friend in that flouriſhing Court of *Henry* VIII, who collected his ſcatter'd Works and dedicated them to his Majeſty in this Manner:

"Most excellent Prince, my moſt redoubted "and gracious Sovereign Lord, I your moſt humble Vaſſal, Subject and Servant, *William Thynne*, "chief Clerck of your Ketchyn, mooved by a certaine Inclination and Zeale, which I have to heare "of any Thing ſounding to the Laude and Honour "of this your noble Realme, have taken great Delectation, as the Tymes and Layſers might ſuffer, "to rede and heare the Bokes of that noble and famous Clerke *Geoffery Chaucer*, in whoſe Works "is ſo manifeſt Comprobation of his excellent "Learning in all kinds of Doctrines and Sciences, "ſuch Fruitfulneſſe in Wordes, well according to "the Matter and Purpoſe, ſo ſwete and pleſaunt "Sentences, ſuch Perfection in Metre, the Compoſition ſo adapted, ſuch Freſhneſſe of Invention, "Compendiouſneſſe in Narration, ſuch ſenſible and "open Style, lacking neither Majeſtie ne Mediocritie covenable in Diſpoſition, and ſuch Sharpneſſe and Quickneſſe in Concluſyon, that it is "much to be marvailed how in his Tyme, (when "doubtleſſe all good Letters were laide aſlepe "throughout the World, as the Thinge whiche "either by the Diſpoſition and Influence of the Bodies above, or by other Ordinaunce of God, "ſeemed like, and was in Daunger to have utterly "periſhed) ſuch an excellent Poet in our Tong "ſhuld (as it were Nature repugning) ſpring and "ariſe." which faithful Teſtimony ſhall be ſtrongly proved in the Progreſs of this our Undertaking; and

and for the preſent by the collateral Evidence of reputed Authors.

Sir Francis Beaumont's *Letter to Mr.* Speght, *dated* June *ult.* 1597. *in Edit.* Chaucer, 1602.

"COMPARE him (*Chaucer*) with other Poets: "His *Canterbury Tales* contain in them almoſt the "ſame Argument, that is handled in Comedies: "his Stile therein for the moſt Part is Low and "Open like unto theirs (giving to *comical* Perſons "ſuch manner of Speeches as did beſt fit their Diſ-"poſitions;) but herein they differ: The Commo-"die Writers do all follow and borrowe one from "another——— *Chaucer*'s Deviſe of his *Can-"terbury* Pilgrimage, is meerly his own: his Drift "is to touch all Sorts of Men, and to diſcover all "Vices of that Age, and that he doth ſo feelingly "and with ſo true an Ayme, as he never fails to "hit whatſoever Marke he levels at. Therefore

"OF *Engliſh* Poets of our own Nation, eſteem "Sir *Geoffery Chaucer* the Father, altho his Style "for the Antiquity may diſtaſte you; yet, as un-"der a bitter and rough Rinde, there lyeth a de-"licate Kernel of Conceit and ſweet Invention: "What Examples, Similitudes, Times, Places, "and above all, Perſons with their Speeches and "Attributes do (as in his *Canterbury Tales*, like "the Threads of Gold, the rich Arras) beautify his "Work quite through? In brief, account him "among the beſt of your *Engliſh* Books in your "Library," ſays *Peacham* on Poetry, *p.* 94. of his *Compleat Gentleman*, 1661. For

He may rightly be call'd the Pith and Sinews of Eloquence and the very Life itſelf of all Mirth and pleaſant Writing: Beſides one Gift he had above all other Authors, and that is, by the Excellencies of his Deſcriptions to poſſeſs his Readers with a ſtronger Imagination of ſeeing that done before their Eyes, which they read, than any other that ever writ in any Tongue: Which I ſhall illuſtrate or explain in the Words of Mr. *Dryden*.

"HE (*Chaucer*) is the Father of *Engliſh* Poe-"try, and therefore I hold him in the ſame De-"gree of Veneration as the *Grecians* held *Homer* "or the *Romans Virgil*. He is a perpetual Fountain "of good Senſe; learn'd in all Sciences; and there-"fore ſpeaks properly on all Subjects: As he knew "what to ſay, ſo he knows alſo when to leave off. "He follow'd Nature every where, but was never "ſo bold to go beyond her.—— That he was a "Man of a moſt wonderful comprehenſive Nature "is moſt certain; becauſe, as it has been truly ob-"ſerved of him, he has taken into the Compaſs of "his *Canterbury Tales* the various Manners and "Humours (as we now call 'em) of the *Engliſh* Na-"tion in his Age. Not a ſingle Character has "eſcap'd him. All his Pilgrims are ſeverally di-"ſtinguiſh'd from each other; and not only in their "Inclinations, but in their very Phyſiognomies "and Perſons. *Baptiſta Porta* * cou'd not have de-"ſcribed their Natures better, than by the Marks "which the Poet gives of them. The Matter "and Manner of their Tales, and of their Telling, "are ſo ſuited to their different Educations, Hu-"mours and Callings, that each of them would be "improper in any other Mouth. Even the grave "and ſerious Characters are diſtinguiſhed by their "ſeveral Sorts of Gravity: their Diſcourſes are "ſuch as belong to their Age, their Calling, and "their Breeding; ſuch as are becoming of them, "and of them only. Some of his Perſons are vi-"cious, and ſome virtuous; ſome are unlearn'd, "or (as *Chaucer* calls 'em) Lewd, and ſome are "Learn'd. Even the Ribaldry of the Low Cha-"racters is different: The *Reeve*, the *Miller* and "*Cook* are ſeveral Men, and diſtinguiſh'd from each "other, as much as the mincing Lady-Prioreſs, "and the broad-ſpeaking, gap-toothed Wife of "*Bath*."

SO that I ſhall for the preſent conclude theſe Teſtimonies with only one more from Sir *Henry Savil* †, who gives it as his Opinion, "That *Chaucer* "is the PRINCE of *Engliſh* POETS, of a ſharp "Judgment and pleaſing Wit, and well skill'd in "Philoſophy and Divinity." Therefore, as it is agreed upon by all hands that CHAUCER was accounted the Chief of the *Engliſh* POETS, not only in his Time, but continues to be ſo eſteem'd in this Age: what ſhou'd diſcourage my Undertaking to publiſh his WORKS in ſuch a modern Dreſs, that it may be juſtly ſaid I now reſtore to this Age the moſt valuable Treaſure of the *Engliſh-Poetic* Libra-ry; ſo that, from the Succeſs we hope this WORK will meet with from our COUNTRYMEN, as for-merly HORACE took the Liberty to ſpeak of Him-ſelf and Works, Methinks I hear CHAUCER ſay:

'Tis finiſh'd; I have rais'd a Monument,
More ſtrong than Braſs, and of a vaſt Extent,
Higher than Egypt's *ſtatel'eſt Pyramid,*
That coſtly Monument of Kingly Pride;
As high as Heav'n, as Earth it's Baſis wide.
Which eating Show'rs, nor North *Wind's piercing Blaſt,*
Nor whirling Time, nor Flight of Years can waſte:
Whole Chaucer *ſhall not die, his Songs ſhall ſave*
His greateſt Portion from the ſilent Grave.
Still freſh I'll grow, ſtill green in future Praiſe,
'Till Time is loſt, and Nature's Frame decays:
England *my Fame reſounds, there all ſhall cry:*
'Twas I, the great *from* mean *Deſcent, 'twas I,*
That firſt did dare to bind the Grecian *Song,*
And Sweeter Numbers in the Britiſh *Tongue.*
MUSE, *take thy Merits due and proudly raiſe*
Thy Head, and gladly crown my Works with Bays.

* *A Writer on Phyſiognomy.*

† *In Pref. to* Bradwardine *de cauſa Dei.*

THE

THE

PROLOGUES

TO THE

CANTE-RBURY TALES.

THESE Prologues are a Key to, and were deſign'd by the Author, to give the Reader a general Idea of thoſe Characters, that are more lively repreſented in his Canterbury Tales; *as well to prepare him for what might be expected under each State and Condition of Life, as that they might, I preſume, ſerve for Arguments to each reſpective Tale. The Method herein obſerved, is, like his* Genius, *entirely new; his Liſt of Perſons are of his own Invention; nor did he borrow his Application from any other, but good and ſtrong Natural Parts of his own Improvement, which not only enabled him to make juſt Reflections on the Age he lived in; but under the ſevereſt Satyr, to reprimand and condemn their Vices and Superſtition. The Scene of Action is laid firſt at the* Talbot, *an Inn in* Southwark, *I ſuppoſe in his Time, noted for its great Trade, or as we ſay, a well-accuſtomed Houſe; and continu'd from thence to the Shrine of* Thomas à Becket, *in thoſe Days call'd,* St. Thomas *of* Canterbury: *an Age when all Sorts and Conditions of Men mingled themſelves in a certain religious Worſhip call'd a Pilgrimage to the Shrine or Reliques of their noted Saints. This* Thomas *of* Canterbury *was of moſt Note in* England *for theſe Kind of Devotions* (v. 15, &c.) *and therefore our Author wiſely conſidered, that a Company of ſuch Pilgrims was the propereſt* Medium *by which he cou'd convey his Sentiments without incurring the Charge of* Hyperbole, *which is always to be avoided as much as may be; becauſe in a Company of Pilgrims, he cou'd not be ſuppoſed to want Choice of Perſons, diſtinct in their Callings and Abilities, nor length of Time, convenient and ſuitable for ſo long an Journey, like to be ſpent in Diſcourſe, eaſily to take up. And the Manner in which they are told, makes it agreeable to the Cuſtom of Travellers, who delight to paſs their Time with a facetious Companion, that can tell them a merry Story. Thus he begins,*

WHEN (1) that *April* with his Shoures (2) ſotè,
The Drought of *March* had perc'd to the Rotè,
And bathed every Vain (3) in ſuch Licour,
Of which Vertue engendred is the Flour:
When (4) *Zephyrus* (5) eke with his ſotè Breath
(6) Eſpired hath in every (7) Holt and (8) Heath
The tender Cropes; and that the (9) yong Sonne
Hath in the (10) Ramm his halvè Courſe yronne,
(11) And ſmalè Foules maken Melodie,
That ſleepen all *the* Night with open Eie,

(1) The firſt twelve Verſes are a Deſcription of the Seaſon of the Year; when People more frequently ſet upon their Traveling Devotions. And herein he ſeems to have been moſt choice of his Words to adapt a Meaning to his whole Deſign: For, as the Pilgrims pretended that they undertook thoſe Devotions by a particular Impulſe of the H. Spirit; ſo the Poet ſeems by *the Drought of March* to intimate that State of *Aridity* or *Dryneſs*, from which they pretended to be rouſed by the ſaid Impulſe deſcribed here by *the ſotè* or *ſweet Showers of April*, &c.

(2) Sweet. (3) Sup. *of Earth.* (4) q. ζωὴ *Life*, and φόρος *bringing*, the *Grecian* Name of *the Weſt Wind.* (5) *alſo.*

(6) Lat. *of* Exſpiro *to ſend forth, blow from* or *out of*; agreeable to the poetical Fiction that aſſigns a Den or Cavern to the Winds, *from* which they *blow.*

(7) Sax. *Wood* or *Foreſt.*

(8) Sax. *Flat* or *open Land.*

(9) Becauſe in the firſt Sign of the Zodiack, which it had enter'd about the middle of *March.*

(10) Called by Aſtronomers, *Aries*, which is *Latin* for a *Ram*, and is the firſt Sign of the Zodiack, which the Sun enters in *March:* It is deſcribed upon Globes by the Picture of a *Ram*, and in the Heavens it is a Conſtellation of *nineteen Stars*, and its common Character is this ♈.

(11) The three following Lines ſeem to be levell'd at the Indolence of thoſe who ſmother the Gifts which Nature has beſtow'd largely upon them, and to propoſe to them an Example of Watchfulneſs and Care in their proper Stations, by introducing the Induſtry of Birds, who from a pure Inſtinct of Nature (*v.* 11.) prepare with the early Spring, when the Trees and Buſhes begin to be cloathed with Leaves, to provide themſelves a Neſt, and keep a continual Watch againſt the too common Invaders of Natural Right.

(So pricketh † hem Nature in * her Courage)
(1) Than longed Folke to go on (2) Pilgrimage:
And (3) *Palmers* for to ſeekin ſtraungè (4) Stronds,
And to (5) ferre (6) Halows (7) couth in ſundry Londs:
'Specially fro every Shires End
Of *Englond*, to (8) *Caunterbury* they wend
The Holy bliſsful Martir (9) for to ſeekè,
That † hem hath holpen, when they wer ‖ ſekè.

It befel *in* that Seaſon, on a Day
In (10) *Southwark* at the (11) *Taberd* as I lay
Ready to wenden (12) on my Pilgrimage (13)
To *Caunterbury* with devout Courage (14).
(15) That Night *wer* come into that (16) Hoſtelry
Wele (17) nine and twenty in a Cumpany
Of ſundry Folke by (18) Aventure (19) yfall
In Fellowſhip, and Pilgrims wer they all;

† *Them.* * *Their.* ‖ *Sick.*

(1) Here the Poet applies what he had ſaid before, *Than*, ſays he, *i. e. in April*, in the *Spring* or about *Eaſter*; the uſual Time for Pilgrimages to be perform'd in.

(2) *Teuton.* The Journey of any Perſon that travels to perform a Vow or pay their Devotion in the Chapel, or before the Shrine or Reliques of a Saint.

(3) Theſe are mentioned in contradiſtinction to the *Folke* in the foregoing Verſe: For, they were People ſuppoſed to have ſome certain Place of Abode, whereto they were to return and ſettle in their proper Callings, as ſoon as they had perform'd that particular Act of Devotion they had vow'd to the viſited Saint: Thoſe were properly call'd *Pilgrims*. But theſe were a kind of vagrant People, who appear to have taken up the Pilgrimage as a certain Means of their Support: for they profeſs'd wilful Poverty and lived upon Contribution or Alms, and vow'd never to lay down their Staff, tied about with Palm Branches, 'till they had obtained the *Palm* or *Victory* over their predominant Paſſions; which Term was at their own Diſcretion, and conſequently, theſe were only a ſort of genteel Beggars, and by the Palm they carry'd in their Hand, were recommended to the Charity of the well-diſpoſed, and obtain'd the Name of *Palmers*.

(4) *Strands* or *Shores*, here it is taken for *Countries* or *Nations*.

(5) *Far.* (6) *Saints.* (7) *Renowned.*

(8) Is the principal City in the County of *Kent*, and gives Title to the Metropolitan of all *England*, the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*. *Cambden* ſays, that without Doubt, it was very famous in the Time of the *Roman* Empire. It ſtands on the E. Side of the River Stour, which the ancient *Britains* call'd DURWHERN, from whence the *Romans* gave it the Name of *Darvernum* and *Dorovernia*. It was formerly the Royal Seat of the Kings of *Kent*; and was of all Probability the firſt *Chriſtian* Biſhoprick in that Part of *England*. It has a fine Cathedral adorn'd with the Interments of eight Kings, and of the renowned *Thomas Becket*, and thereby became the great Reſort of Pilgrims, and the Scene of our Poet's fruitful Invention.

(9) i. e. *Thomas à Becket*, at firſt a Favourite at Court, promoted to the Archbiſhoprick of *Canterbury* by *Henry* IId of *England*, as a Perſon entirely in his Intereſt: but *Thomas* no ſooner ſaw himſelf ſettled in this higheſt Station over the Church of *England*, than he boldly attack'd the King, and for treaſonable Practices was baniſh'd the Kingdom, having forfeited his Temporalities, which the Crown ſeized according to Law. The King at length was wrought upon to admit him again to his former State and Condition, but *Thomas* took this good Nature as a Confeſſion of a Conqueſt, and accordingly behaved himſelf as inſolently as a Conqueror; which was deſervedly puniſh'd, tho' in an unjuſtifiable Manner by improper Perſons, and at an improper Time, while he was at Evening Prayers in the Church. The King, being charged by the Pope as one acceſſary to the Deed, deny'd the ſame, but in the Weakneſs of his Judgment, ſubmitted himſelf to be publickly diſciplin'd by the Monks of *Canterbury*, to expiate and attone for the Crime of others; and they embracing the Opportunity obtain'd this Man's Canonization, whoſe Merit was an obſtinate Adherence to the Pope againſt the King his lawful Sovereign. So that thro' the King's Weakneſs and the Monkiſh Craft, this Biſhop became the general Phyſician of the bigotted Part of the Nation, as *Chaucer* does hereby repreſent. But *Henry* VIII put an End to this Superſtition by deſtroying his Tomb and burning his Bones.

(10) *Southwark* is a large Borough in the County of *Surry* and the Hundred of *Brixton*, oppoſite to *London*, on the other ſide of the *Thames*, and under the Juriſdiction of the Lord Mayor of *London*; but ſtill enjoys many ancient Privileges peculiar to itſelf, and ſends two Repreſentatives to the Houſe of Commons. In Number of Inhabitants and Buildings it exceeds moſt Cities, amongſt which are two famous Hoſpitals for publick Benefit for the Sick and Lame, known by the Names of St. *Thomas*'s, and *Guy*'s Hoſpitals.

(11) The *Talbot*, a large Inn in *Southwark*, on the Left Hand from the Bridge, almoſt as high up as *Margret*'s *Hill*, very commodious for Travellers; for ſays *Chaucer* a few Verſes below, *The Chambers and Stables weren wide:* and afterwards he gives this deſirable Account of his good Entertainment, and well-bred Hoſt (*v.* 749.)

Grete cherè made our Hoſt as everichone,
And to the Suppere ſet he us anone:
And ſervid us with Vittailes of the beſt,
Strong was the Wine, and wele to drink us leſt.
A ſemely Man our Hoſtè was withal,
To ben a Marſhall in a Lord'is Hal;
A largè Man he was, with eyin Stepe,
A fayrer Burgeis is there none in *Chepe*;
Bold of his Speche, and wiſe, and well ytaught,
And of Manhodè lakked him nought.

As if he had ſaid:

Our Hoſt received us kindly and provided us with a good Supper, ſerved up with the beſt Proviſions and Wine to be bought for Money: He was of a graceful Aſpect, of a free and courteous Behaviour; he knew what, and when to ſpeak; ſo that in every reſpect he deſerved, and gain'd the Reſpect of his Gueſts. I have been rather the more particular in this Note; becauſe theſe Stories were propoſed by the Hoſt (*v.* 794.) and to ſet ſuch Innholders a Pattern, who have not attain'd, or have ſwerved from this Hoſt's Accommodation of Strangers; but let them who can't ſo eaſily apply what is only in writing to a ſerious Practice, take my Direction to the ſaid *Talbot* Inn in *Southwark*, which ſtill ſubſiſts, and is poſſeſſed by an Hoſt, who proves himſelf no ways inferiour to him that is deſcribed to have lived there in the Days of *Chaucer*.

(12) *To proceed.* (13) *See* Note 2 above.

(14) *With fervent Devotion.* (15) Sup. *In.*

(16) *Inn.* See Note 11. (17) *Full.* (18) *By Chance.*

(19) *Fallen.* Where note that the *y* which is prefixed to this Word *fall* is a *Saxoniſm*, and frequently prefixed by the old *Engliſh* to Verbs in the perfect Tenſe, and very rarely to any other. This initial Letter *y* or *i* in many Places makes the whole Difference between the old and the modern Word, the latter may be found by caſting away the *y* or *i*; which, if it ſignifies any thing in ſuch Caſes, muſt be render'd by *there*; as in the preſent Caſe *by Aventure yfall*, i. e. *by Chance were there fallen*. It is alſo put ſometimes before Nouns, but very ſeldom; *e. g. ylike* for *like*, as below at (*v.* 594.) of the Prologue. And ſometimes when it is ſet alone it ſtands for *I* the firſt Perſon.

That

That toward *Caunterbury* woulden ride.
The Chambers and the Stables weren wide (1),
And wele weren they eaſed at the beſt (2).
And ſhortly when the Sonne was *gan* to reſt (3),
So had I ſpoken (4) with † hem everichone (5),
That I was of * her Fellowſhip anone (6);
And made *a* (7) Forward early for to riſe
To take our Way there (8), as I you deviſe (9).
But netheles, while I have Time and Space,
Or that I ferther in this *my* Tale pace (10);
Me thinkith it accordaunt (11) to Reaſon,
Firſt to tell you all the Condicion (12)
Of ech of † hem, ſo as it ſeemed mee (13),
And which (14) they wer, and *eke* of what Degree (15),
And eke in what Array (16) that they wer in;
And at a *Knight* (17) then woll I firſt begin:

The KNIGHT.

A Knight there (18) was, and that a worthy Man
That fro ‖ the Time *in which* He firſt began
To riden out, he loved Chevalry (19),
Trouth *and* Honour, Fredome and Curteſy (20).
Full worthy (21) was he in his Lord'is Warre (22)
And thereto (23) had ridden no Man ſo farre
As wel in Chriſtendome, as Heatheneſſe (24)
And *aie* (25) had Honour for his Worthineſſe (26).
At (27) *Aliſaundre'* he was whan (28) it was won:
Full often time he had the Bourd begon (29)
Aboven all *other* Nations in *Pruce* (30);

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(1) *Were many, large, commodious.*

(2) They were treated with the beſt Chear that could be provided. *See* Note 11. *in the* 2d *page.*

(3) Our Author in this Verſe alludes to the poetical Fiction of the Sun's ſetting in *Thety*'s Boſom, when he diſappears from our Horiſon; there to take his Reſt till we ſee him riſe the next Morning. Thus *Ovid* Met. l. 2. v. 68.

Tunc etiam, quæ me Subjectis excipit Undis
——— *Tethys ſolet* ———

This *Tethys* was feign'd to be the Daughter of *Heaven* and *Earth*, and Wife of the *Ocean*; and is frequently, as in this Place ſet for *the Sea*. So that this Story of the *Sun*'s reſting in *Tethy*'s Boſom, ſeems to have riſen from a falſe Notion of the Ancients, That when the *Sun* departs from our Sight, he dips himſelf in the *Sea*.

(4) *I had diſcourſed in ſuch a Manner.* (5) *Every one.*

(6) *That I was preſently admitted into their Company.*

(7) *A Propoſal.* (8) *To* Canterbury.

(9) *In the Manner I ſhall to you declare.* (10) *Proceed.*

(11) *Agreeable* or [illegible].

(12) *All the State of Life.*

(13) *Appeared to me.* (14) i. e. *Men* or *Women.*

(15) *Calling* or *State of Life they were of.*

(16) *Dreſs.* (17) *A Warriour* or *Soldier.*

(18) At the *Talbot* Inn amongſt the Pilgrims.

(19) *Knighthood* as it is now taken from the *French* Word *Chevalier*. It properly denotes all Deeds of Chevalry at ſingle Combat or in the Field of Battle; and this moſt certainly is the Meaning of *Chaucer* in this Place, as the following Deſcription of his warlike Exploits does fully declare.

(20) Vertues becoming all People, and neceſſary to accompliſh a Gentleman: but rarely to be found united in the Martial Compoſition of a Soldier. (21) *Renowned.*

(22) In the Holy War, which about that Time was carried on under the Banner of Chriſt our Lord. (23) *In that War.*

(24) *Turkey* call'd *Heatheneſſe* becauſe they don't believe in the Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt*. (25) *Always.*

(26) *Gallant Behaviour.*

(27) Or *Aleſſaundre* or *Aliſaundrie*, as it is ſometimes ſpelt in the Courſe of this Work, was a famous City of *Egypt*, which we call *Alexandria*. There are other Cities of this Name, one built by *Alexander the Great* beyond the River *Tanais*; another in *Poland*, upon the Banks of the River *Horin* in the Palatinate of *Luſuc*; and a fourth in *Suſiana* in *Aſia*. But what engages me to fix upon the *Egyptian Alexandria*, as that, which our Author particularly regarded, is the great Quantity of *Chriſtian* Blood that was ſpilt in Defence of the ſame when it was taken from the *Chriſtians* by *Amrus* the *Moor*, after a Siege of thirteen Months; and when the *Chriſtians* regain'd it in the Time of the Holy War, to which this Verſe relates more particularly. This City is now in the Hands of the *Turks*, who have named it *Scanderick*. It was built by *Alexander the Great* about 330 Years before Chriſt; and before the *Europeans* found the Way by Sea to the *Eaſt-Indies*, it was the great Mart for all Sorts of *Spices*, brought there by Camels from the *Red Sea*. Long. 58. 20. Lat. 31. 25. (28) *Anno* 1167.

(29) *Taken the upper End of the Table* or *Bourd:* For this Knight, being often among the Knights of the *Dutch* or *Teutonic* Order in *Pruſſia*, he was for his Worthineſs placed by them at the Table before any of what Nation ſoever. But to ſhew the Beauty of *Chaucer*'s Thought in this reſpect, who values his Knight on the Compliments paid him by the *Teutonic* Knights, you muſt know, That when *Jeruſalem* was in the Hands of the *Chriſtians*, theſe Knights dwelt there, and were bound to entertain the Pilgrims that viſited the Holy Places, and if Neceſſity requir'd to ſerve in War againſt the *Saracens*. They were clothed in white with a black Croſs on their upper [illegible] admitted into it but *Dutch* Gentlemen. After *Jeruſalem* was laſt taken by the *Saracens* Anno 1184, the Knights retir'd to *Ptolemais*, and thence into *Germany*, where they obtained Leave from *Frederick* IId then Emperor *Anno* 1220, to make Repriſals upon the *Pruſſians*, that made Incurſions upon them, and to turn the Spoil to the Maintenance of their Order. By this Means they conquer'd *Pruſſia*, and grew ſo rich that they built many Temples, and Places of Reſidence for Biſhops, who were alſo enjoin'd to wear the Habit of the Order.

(30) *Pruſſia*, See the foregoing Note. *Pruſſia* was a great and fruitful Province of the Kingdom of *Poland*, call'd by the Inhabitants, *Prouſs*; by the *Poles*, *Pruſſy*; by the *Germans*, *Preuſſen*; by the old *Engliſh*, *Pruce*; by the modern *Engliſh*, and *Italians*, *Pruſſia*; bounded on the *North* by the *Baltick* Sea, on the *Weſt* by *Pomerania*, on the *South* by *Poland* and *Mazovia*; and on the *Eaſt* by *Lithuania* and *Samogitia*. This Province was firſt under Sovereign Dukes of its own; afterwards under the Knights of the *Teutonic Order*, who in 1228 began a long and bloody War, which ended with its Conqueſt. In 1454, the *weſtern* Part was loſt from that *Order*, being ſubdued by the *Poles*; in 1500 the *Grand Maſter of the Order* triumphed over the *Muſcovites*, that had fallen upon *Pruſſia* and *Lithuania*. In 1525 the *Eaſtern* Part alſo ſubmitted to the Crown of *Poland*, when *Albert* Marqueſs of *Brandenburg*, the thirty fourth and laſt Maſter of that *Order*, doing Homage for the ſame, obtain'd from that Crown the ſaid *Eaſtern* Part with the Title of *Duke of Pruſſia*, which is ſince in our Days erected into a Kingdom under *Frederick* the firſt King of *Pruſſia* and Elector of the *Roman* Empire.

* *Their.* † *Them.* ‖ *From.*

In (1) *Lettow* had he ridden, and in *Ruce* (2),
No *Chriſten* Man ſo oft of his Degree
In (3) *Granada*: in the Sege *ben* had hee
Of (4) *Algezir*, and rid in (5) *Belmary*;
At (6) *Leyis* was he, and at (7) *Sataly*,
When they wer won (8), and *eke at* the grete
See (9)
In many' a noble Army *ben* had hee:
At (10) mortal Battailes had he ben fifteene,
And foughten for our Feith at (11) *Tramiſene*
In Liſtes (12) thrys †, and * aie he ſlaine his Foe
This ‖ ilkè worthy Knight had ben alſoe
Sometimes with the Lord of *Palathy* (13)
Agenſt another Heathen in *Turky*;
And evermore he had a ſov'rane Priſe;
And though he was worthy (14), yet he was wiſe (15),
And of his Sport (16) as meke, as is a Maid;
He nevir yet *done* Villany (17), ne ſaid (18)
In all his Life, unto no manner Wight (19):
He was a very perfite gentil Knight.

For, to tell you ſoothly (20) of his Array,
His Horſe was good; but he was nothing gay;
Of *Fuſtian* he wared a *Gippon* (21)
All beſmottred (22) with his *Haubergion* (23),
For he was late-*ly* come from his Viage (24),
And *now* went for to do his Pilgrimage.

The SQUIRE.

With him ther was his Sonne, a yong Squiere,
A Lover, and a luſty Batchillere
With his Lockes curl, as they wer laid in Preſſe,
Of twenty Yere of Age he was, as I *do* geſſe,
Of his Stature he was of even (25) Length,
Wonderly delyver (26), and of grete Strengh.
And he had been ſometime in Chivanchy (27)
In *Flaunders* (28), in *Artois* (29), and *Picardy* (30),
And born him wele (31), as of ſo little Space,
In Hope to ſtand-*en* in his Lady's (32) Grace.
Embrouded was he (33), as it wer a Mede
All full of freſh Flouris, both white and rede.

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(1) *Lithuania*, a Province and grand Dukedom, now united for ever to the Kingdom of *Poland*. And *Chaucer* here intimates that our Knight ſerved in the *Teutonic* Body when they aſſiſted to reduce the Inhabitants of *Lithuania* to the *Chriſtian* Faith.

(2) *Ruſſia*, ſo I read it after *Speght*, &c. which is manifeſtly the Senſe, tho' Mr. *Urry* has perverted it into the Word *Luce*, which again with as little Authority, he interprets in his Gloſſary, to mean *Livonia*, *Liefland*: For *Chaucer* has an Eye to the War in which the *Poles* under *Caſimir* IId *Anno* 1342 conquer'd *Red Ruſſia*, wherein it is ſuppoſed our Knight ſerv'd a Voluntier.

(3) *Granada* [illegible] *Mediterranean* Sea, the *Eaſtern* Part of the ancient *Hiſpania Boetica*. It was one of the firſt Kingdoms the *Moors* poſſeſſed themſelves of, and of the laſt they loſt; for the *Spaniards*, (tho' *Peter* the Son of *Alphonſus* King of *Caſtile*, ſurpriſed and ſlew one of their Kings in 1350) were not able to expel them till the Year 1492 under King *Ferdinando*. During which Time many brave *Chriſtian* Champions ſacrificed their Lives and Fortunes againſt the *Moors*, amongſt which, our Knight you hear, was one that ventur'd his Life more than any of his Degree or Quality.

(4) Formerly a Town and Port upon the Streights of *Gibraltar* on the *Spaniſh* Shore, it was taken from the *Moors* by *Alphonſus* XI King of *Caſtile*, *Anno* 1344; at which Siege, remarkable for its Danger and Bloodſhed, our Knight was preſent.

(5) *i. e.* He purſued the *Moors* croſs the Streights into *Barbary*: for this *Belmary* is a Province of *Mauritania Tingitana*, call'd *Benamerin*. See Note 11. below.

(6) *Sp.* takes it to be *Leviſſa* on the Continent, not far from *Rhodes*, with much more Reaſon than *Sk.* ſuppoſes it to be *Libiſſa*, a City of *Bithynia*.

(7) This City was formerly call'd *Satalia* or *Attalia*, built on the Shore in *Pamphylia*, a Province of the *Leſſer Aſia*: The *Turks* call it *Satalyah*.

(8) He was at the taking of theſe two Cities laſt mentioned, from the *Saracens*. (9) The *Euxine* Sea. (10) *Bloody*.

(11) A City in *Barbary* in the Province of *Mauritania Tingitana*. (12) *In ſingle Combat*.

† *Thrice* * *Always*. ‖ *Same*.

(13) *Palathia*, a City ſays *Sp.* in *Anatolia*, or ſome City in *Paleſtine* (*Sk.*); but as we cannot find any ſuch City in thoſe Parts, I muſt beg leave to diſſent; becauſe I find that the City of *Tyre* is called *Palaty-rus*, which ſignifies *old Tyre*, and with an Imitation, might in *Chaucer*'s Time be called *Palathy*, which after a noble and long Defence by the *Chriſtians* againſt the *Turks*, was brought under the *Turkiſh* Thraldom *An.* 1289.

(14) *Brave, ſtout.* (15) *Not raſh.*

(16) *And in his Gallantry.* (17) *Wrong.*

(18) *Nor ſaid Evil.* (19) *Unto any ſort of Man.*

(20) Sax. *Truely.* (21) *A very ſhort Coat* or *Waiſtecoat.*

(22) *Bedaubed.* (23) [illegible]

(24) Here the Poet introduceth the Reaſon of the Knight's preſent Pilgrimage to *Canterbury*, and very properly: For, it would ſeem very ſtrange, after he has given ſuch a Character of his Knight's Travels and Feats of Chivalry in Defence of *Chriſtianity*, to bring him home to the Shrine of a domeſtic Saint: he therefore intimates, that when the Knight was returning home, he had vow'd, as is a common Practice among thoſe that believe *the Interceſſion of Saints*, that if he ſhould arrive ſafe on *Engliſh* Ground, he would proceed on Pilgrimage, and offer up his Gift and Thanks at the famous Shrine of the *Canterbury Saint*.

(25) *Upright.* (26) *Nimble* or *active.*

(27) *He had already born Arms.*

(28) Is the greateſt and nobleſt of the Provinces called the *Low Countries*: bounded on the *Eaſt* with *Hainault* and *Brabant*; on the *Weſt* by the *Britiſh* Ocean; on the *North* with the Seas of *Zealand*; and on the *South* in part by *Artois* and in part by *Hainault* and *Picardy*.

(29) This was the Country of the ancient *Atrabates*, its Capital is *Arras*; it was once the *Eaſt* Part of *Flanders*, but became a ſeperate Earldom in 1198, and continu'd ſo till 1382, when it return'd to the Earls of *Flanders*, at which Time it is probable our Squire was initiated in the Military State.

(30) A Province in the *North* of *France* bordering on the two former.

(31) And behaved himſelf well.

(32) *His Sweetheart*'s.

(33) His Cloths were embroider'd with Gold and Silver, which by a very natural Simile he repreſents by the *white* and *red* Flowers that ſpring up with the Graſs in Meadows.

Singing